

Soft Skills: The Competitive Edge

Arizona Department of
Education Transition
Conference
Scottsdale, AZ
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National
Collaborative on
Workforce and
Disability

NCWD
For Youth

Navigating the Road to Work
Making the Connection between
Youth with Disabilities & Employment



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Agenda

- Who Are We & What We Do
- What are Soft Skills?
- What do Employers Want?
- How do You Identify & Develop Youth's Soft Skills?
- Pulling it All Together: Marketing Youth's Soft Skills!

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Who Are We & What We Do

Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP), U.S. Department of Labor:

- Mission: Provide national leadership on disability employment policy
- Vision: A world in which people with disabilities have unlimited employment opportunities

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Who Are We & What We Do

National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability Youth (NCWD - Youth):

- Center for Workforce Development, Institute on Educational Leadership (IEL)
- National Youth Employment Coalition (NYEC)
- National Association of Workforce Development Professionals (NAWDP)
- PACER Center
- Center on Education and Work, University of Wisconsin-Madison
- Institute for Community Integration, University of Minnesota

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NCWD – *Guideposts for Success:*

- School-Based Preparatory Experiences
- Career Preparation and Work-Based Learning
- Youth Development and Leadership
- Connecting Activities
- Family Involvement and Supports

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What are Soft Skills?

*Soft skills refer to the traits, work habits, and attitudes that all workers across all occupations must have in order to obtain, maintain, and progress in employment. Such attributes include ability to:

- Get along with others;
- Work in teams;
- Attend to tasks;
- Work independently; and
- Provide excellent customer service, both within the company and externally.

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* NCWD - Youth

What do Employers Want?

*Essentials Skills to Getting a Job:

- Communication
- Working with Others (Networking)
- Learning to Add Value (Problem Solving and Critical Thinking)
- Professionalism

*ODEP's Essential Skills to Getting a Job Fact Sheet

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How do You Identify & Develop Youth's Soft Skills?

*Look at the Bigger Picture:

- Learning for Access
- Learning for Voice
- Learning for Independent Action
- Learning as a Bridge to the Future

*National Institute for Literacy's Equipped for the Future Content Standards

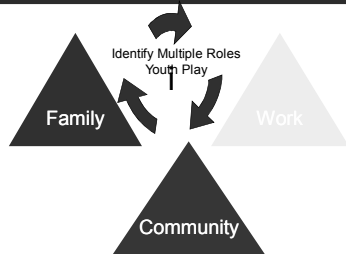
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How do You Identify & Develop Youth's Soft Skills?



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How do You Identify & Develop Youth's Soft Skills?



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Pulling it All Together: Marketing Youth's Soft Skills

"STAR" Reflection Process:

- Situation;
- Task;
- Action; and
- Results

= SOFT SKILLS

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"STAR" Reflection Process

Family Example:

S - Working mom; younger siblings; and messy house

T - Clean house; watch siblings; and do homework

A - Figured out what needed to get done and created chore chart

R - House was cleaned; persuaded siblings to help with the chores; and finished homework

SOFT SKILLS - Decision Making and Organization skills; Influenced others; and Time management

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Resources

Essential Skills to Getting a Job
www.dol.gov/odep/documents/essential_job_skills.pdf

National Institute for Literacy's Equipped for the Future Content Standards
www.eff.cis.utk.edu/PDF/standards_guide.pdf

411 on Disability Disclosure
www.ncwd-youth.info/411-on-disability-disclosure

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Websites

ODEP
www.dol.gov/odep

Disability.Gov
www.disability.gov

Find Youth Info.Gov
www.findyouthinfo.gov

NCWD-Youth
www.ncwd-youth.info

Center for Workforce Development, Institute on Educational Leadership (IEL)
www.iel.org/about.html

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Websites

National Youth Employment Coalition (NYEC)
www.nyec.org/

National Association of Workforce Development Professionals (NAWDP)
www.nawdp.org/AM/Template.cfm?Section=HomePage

PACER Center
www.pacer.org/

Center on Education and Work, University of Wisconsin-Madison
www.cew.wisc.edu/

Institute for Community Integration, University of Minnesota
www.ici.umn.edu/

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